

**INTERNSHIP AT SANTA CATALINA MONASTERY MUSEUM
CONSERVATION OF MURAL PAINTING
AREQUIPA**

INTRODUCTION

The monastery is located in the city of Arequipa, Peru, 746 miles south of Lima and 7500 feet above sea level. Humidity levels are low and temperatures change drastically from day to night. During the months of June, July, and August, temperatures can drop to 32 degrees Fahrenheit at dawn.

The monastery was built in 1579 in volcanic rock (sillar) and is one of the most representative buildings of colonial religious architecture in Arequipa. Built in the center of town, the monastery is like a small fortress shut off from the busy city by thick stonewalls. The convent is composed of a series of small cells where the closure nuns once lived, and occupies a total area of 219,863 square feet. Presently, nuns live in neighboring building.

Due to earthquakes over the centuries, there have been several restorations and architectural interventions in different parts of the buildings.

The museum receives approximately 85,000 visitors per year.

DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT

There is evidence of mural painting in various sections of the monastery. However the most important mural is covered with several layers of paint and is located in the area known as the Lower Chorus.

The Chorus walls have approximately 1876 square feet. The state of conservation of the mural in this section is very uneven. The painting has received no treatment and its existence has only been proven through some samples in various parts of the Chorus walls. In these samples, the painting contains gold plated images, which makes its conservation even more difficult.

STAGE ONE – 5 DAYS

Take samples from different parts of the Chorus walls to determine the number of possible mural paintings and their conservation state.

Interns must present a written report including a treatment proposal at the end of the internship.

STAGE TWO – 20 DAYS

The second phase of the project is to rescue the part of the Lower Chorus walls that are in the best condition.

- Remove all layers of paint that cover the murals with a scalpel.
- Consolidate fragments with Mowilite DM1H.
- Apply a thin layer of Paraloid B-71 to protect the painting.
- Clean the murals with fiberglass erasers.
- Replace missing parts with stuccowork.

New proposals and techniques may be discussed with local supervisors.
Interns must present a written report of the work performed.

STAGE THREE – 5 DAYS

Take samples from various parts of the monastery walls to determine the number of existing mural paintings in the entire construction.

The intern must present a written report including inventory of findings at the end of the internship.

NUMBER OF INTERNS AND TIME PERIOD

Three (3) interns for two months each (60 working days) from July 15 to August 31, 2005.

Working schedule: Monday through Fridays from 8:30 am to 4:00 pm, with one hour for lunch at noon.

MATERIALS

Materials needed are: Mowilite DM1H, Parloid B-71 and fiber glass erasers. The Monastery will reimburse these expenses.

SUPERVISION

Project supervisors will be Isabel Olivares and Anita Grupp, who will be at the Monastery at all times. They will supervise the work but will not do the work themselves.

COSTS

The Monastery will provide in-kind support and lodging in a boarding house with breakfast.

The American Embassy will provide the materials needed for the internship and up to \$ 300 total for M&I per participant for the time period.

The University or student should provide other costs such as roundtrip international tickets to Lima and in-country tickets to Arequipa, and meals and incidentals.

APPLICANTS

Applicants must be Spanish-speaking American citizens in a graduate program in conservation and/or restoration.